

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 101287
ORIGIN ARA-14

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: XR, PEPR, PDIP

SUBJECT: ARA WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS - APRIL 12-19/78

1. ATTENTION WAS RIVETED TO THE PANAMA TREATIES DEBATE HERE. WE REMAINED OPTIMISTIC THROUGHOUT THE PERILS OF PAULINE, BUT THERE WERE ENOUGH CLOSE CALLS TO CHALLENGE EVEN THE MOST OPTIMISTIC. FULL SENATE AGREEMENT SATISFACTORY TO PANAMA ON THE COMPROMISE LANGUAGE CLARIFYING THE DECONCINI RESERVATION CAME LATE MONDAY, BUT DOUBTS PERSISTED AS TO WHETHER THE SLIM MAJORITY THAT CARRIED THE FIRST TREATY WOULD HOLD FOR THE SECOND VOTE. THE FINAL VOTE OF 68 TO 32 APPROVING THE TREATY WAS AS DRAMATIC AS IT WAS SATISFYING. IN A POST-VOTE SPEECH, TORRIJOS ACCEPTED THE CHANGES BROUGHTBY THE SENATE TO BOTH TREATIES. PRESIDENT CARTER TALKED WITH TORRIJOS AND EXPRESSED PUBLIC SATISFACTION AT THE FAVORABLE OUTCOME.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 101287

2. OFFICIAL TRAVELS: PREPARATIONS FOR THE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO MEXICO ARE CONTINUING, AND WE LEARNED THIS WEEK OF ANOTHER HIGH-LEVEL VISITOR TO THE REGION. MRS. CARTER WILL BE TRAVELING TO COSTA RICA MAY 6 OR 7 TO ATTEND THE INAUGURATION OF RODRIGO CARAZO AS COSTA RICA'S NEXT PRESIDENT. THE COSTA RICANS HAD EXPRESSED THE HOPE

THAT THE INAUGURATION WOULD ATTRACT HIGH-LEVEL U.S. REPRESENTATION, AS A SIGNAL OF OUR POSITIVE SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS-RESPECTING COUNTRIES.

3. IDB - LALO VALDEZ AND RICHARD ARELLANO ARE AMONG OUR DELEGATES IN VANCOUVER. AS THE U.S. REPLENISHMENT EFFORT SHAPES UP, ONE OF THE MAIN TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION WILL BE ACCESS BY THE LESS POOR COUNTRIES TO FSO FUNDS FOR DEVELOPMENT.

4. AID DIRECTORS MEET - THE AID MISSION DIRECTORS MEETING IN WASHINGTON LAST WEEK WAS A SUCCESS, WITH THE MISSION DIRECTORS HAVING AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS DIRECTLY WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH KEY WASHINGTON OFFICIALS THE PROBLEMS AND ISSUES THEY FACE. ONE OF THE MAJOR ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION REVOLVED AROUND AID'S STRATEGY FOR DEALING WITH PROBLEMS OF THE POOR IN LESS-POOR COUNTRIES, AND HOW THIS WOULD AFFECT THE LEVEL OF U.S. ASSISTANCE IN THE REGION.

5. SUGAR - THE ITC HAS MADE ITS RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PRESIDENT REGARDING SUGAR PRICING POLICY. ECP IS PREPARING A PAPER FOR THE SECRETARY ON SUGAR IN RESPONSE TO THE SECRETARY'S COMMITMENT TO CARIBBEAN AMBASSADORS TO MEET WITH THEM ON THIS ISSUE. ECP IS ALSO WORKING ON A PAPER FOR THE SECRETARY IN RESPONSE TO THE CARIBBEAN
SECRET

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PAGE 03 STATE 101287

COUNTRIES CONCERN ABOUT POSSIBLE CHANGES IN THE U.S. TAX LAWS WHICH WOULD SERIOUSLY AFFECT CONVENTION TOURIST TRADE. CHRISTOPHER

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